

LEAVING THE WASTELAND

O Christ, the Lord of pasture land,
I hoped to leave my dismal plain,
Forgetting desert histories
Of weary wasteland memories,
To settle down beneath Your hand
In lush green gardens rich with rain
Or fields of fruit and golden grain,
Instead of dust and wind-blown sand.

O God, I sought a better place:
I dreamed of frequent, quiet rests;
I prayed to cease from routine toil,
To quit the arid, barren soil
Where daily I was forced to face
The dull, unending chores and tests,
Or vexing, stinging prairie pests,
Ordeals that fueled my burning pace.

O Lord, You knocked upon my door,
To enter in, to dwell and dine
With me, the inattentive host
Who'd wandered from his inner post
Bewildered, thirsty, weak and poor.
Yet, in our temple, Yours and mine,
You brought Your living bread and wine,
The feast I was created for.

Within are where Your pleasures hide. . .
External cares distort my view,
And worldly works distract the will
Your Presence was ordained to fill.
Your paradise is deep inside
Where union blends the sweet and true
In secret fellowship with You,
Transforming wasteland life outside.

Dear Jesus, You fulfilled Your Name:
“Jehovah saves!” “Jehovah heals!”
Your hand could no way better bless
Than guide me from my wilderness
Back to the Source from which I came.
My heart, which outward life conceals,
Is where Your soothing light reveals
Yourself the haven I must claim.

— *David L. Hatton, 4/24/1993*